

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1/ A ship's steering unit comprising a mounting which is part of the structure of the ship, and in which a rudder is pivotally mounted, the angular positioning of said rudder being servo-controlled by a motor comprising a stator rigidly fixed to the mounting, and a rotor rigidly fixed to said rudder, wherein said rudder is held in position by controlling the power supply to the motor.

2/ A ship's steering unit according to claim 1, in which the motor is an asynchronous motor which is powered by a power converter controlled so as to hold said rudder in position.

3/ A steering unit according to claim 1, in which said rudder includes a steering cone pivotally mounted in said mounting, and in which said electric motor is mounted inside said steering cone.

4/ A steering unit according to claim 1, in which said rudder includes an underwater portion in the form of a rudder blade.

5/ A steering unit according to claim 1, in which said rudder includes an underwater portion in the form of a pod enclosing a propulsion motor for propelling said ship.

6/ A steering unit according to claim 2, in which said electric motor is cooled by the ventilation system of said propulsion motor.

7/ A steering unit according to claim 2, in which the stator has a plurality of electrical windings, each of which is powered by an independent power converter.